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Murder charges laid in Moosomin First Nation death

Two teens accused of second-degree murder. Officers found victim after reports of an assault early Sunday

MORGAN MODJESKI
morgan.modjeski@metronews.ca

Saskatchewan RCMP have charged two men with second-degree murder in the death of 24-year-old Bryan Darnell Blackstar.

Officers found the victim at a residence at Moosomin First Nation near North Battleford on Sunday about 4:40 a.m., when responding to a call about an assault.

RCMP confirmed on Monday afternoon that the two suspects, aged 18 and 19, who were earlier taken into custody, have been charged with second-degree murder and will appear in provincial court in North Battleford on Tuesday morning.

"I'm certain this is not a pleasant time for the community," Insp. John Sutherland, who leads the Battleford detachment, told Metro.

He added that the charges mark a positive turn for the investigation, though he declined to give information on the cause of death or reveal the names of the suspects.

Family members of Blackstar have described the victim as quiet and hard-working.

"I'm saddened and I'm taking time off work to cope with it, and to help out," Donald Blackstar, the man's uncle, said in a phone interview.

He added that his nephew "didn't look for trouble," and that he and other family members are having difficulty coping with the tragedy.

A number of support services responded along with North Battleford Rural RCMP, including North Battleford and Meadow Lake police dog services. Sutherland said that kind of response is expected for such an investigation.

"We certainly responded with all the appropriate units and the support services that are required for any serious investigation," Sutherland said, noting that several people were at the home during the incident.

An autopsy into the cause of death has been tentatively scheduled for Tuesday.

The community

140 km

The homicide is the first this year in the community about 140 kilometres northwest of Saskatoon.

STUDIO TAKES A BOW

Jordan Smith, co-owner and operator of the Avenue Recording Company, says relocating the studio from its current location on Dufferin Avenue to a new site is too much work, and as a result, they'll close their doors at the end of March. While he's sad to see it close, he hopes it's remembered fondly by the city's music industry. Story, page 2. MORGAN MODJESKI/METRO

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NEWS

Wall not ruling out tax hike

SUMA meeting.
Premier says pressing infrastructure needs could force his hand

MARCO VIGLIOTTI
Metro in Regina

Premier Brad Wall says the provincial government will do its best to hold the line on taxes as part of its bid to deliver a balanced budget this spring.

However, he refused on Monday to completely close the door on possibly raising taxes to keep pace with Saskatchewan's burgeoning infrastructure needs.

"The prime directive is a balanced budget, and a subset of that would be a balanced budget without any changes to the taxes," Wall told reporters in Regina following a speech at an annual meeting of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA).

"The last resort is that we have to look at some sort of revenue that would be dedicated to infrastructure.... We wouldn't rule that out."

Wall said he would "very reluctantly" consider an increase to the education property tax (EPT) if the government requires additional revenue for infrastructure projects.

"We have a lot of building to do in this province to keep up on the infrastructure front," he noted, citing waterworks facilities in small- and medium-sized centres as among the pressing needs.

The premier used his address to municipal officials to reaffirm his government's commitment to an "all-of-the-above approach" — including public-private partnerships (P3s) — to finance infrastructure.

"If we don't engage with the private sector and (federal agency) P3 Canada ... I don't know how we get those large projects done," Wall stated, also lauding Regina's city council for pursuing a P3 to pay for a planned $224-million wastewater treatment plant.

Infrastructure concerns are looming heavily at the SUMA conference, as numerous Saskatchewan communities face unprecedented growth while the province's roaring economy continues to lure residents of other provinces to the Land of Living Skies.

"We have an infrastructure deficit in this province," Wall added.

"Arguably, we had it before the very rapid growth began ... so now it is even more acute."

Premier Brad Wall addresses municipal leaders on Monday in Regina at the meeting of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association. MARCO VIGLIOTTI/METRO IN REGINA

Avenue Recording Co. closing its doors

Co-owners of the Avenue Recording Company, Jordan Smith, left, and Mike Lefebvre. MORGAN MODJESKI/METRO

The music community in Saskatoon will soon lose a good friend.

The Avenue Recording Company announced over the weekend it is set to close its studio doors as of March 31, when its lease ends, and won't be seeking a new location.

"I've got a very understanding wife and she's been by my side for three studio builds, but it's a gross amount of time that goes into making the facility and I can't really do that again," said studio co-owner and operator Jordan Smith.

Producing more than seven terabytes of recordings, about 100 artists have come through the studio's current Dufferin Avenue location.

While Smith is saddened by the closure, he hopes the studio's legacy will live on.

"I'm very proud of everything that we've done here," he said Monday of the studio's three-year run in the space.

"I'm very humbled by the amount of support we've had in announcing our closure. A lot of people do seem genuinely sad about it leaving ... so I hope that a bit of the legend goes on."

Neil Bergen, general manager at CFCR Community Radio, said the loss of the Avenue Recording Company is a blow to the city's music scene, but he's confident other recording venues will step up.

"I think they had a very big role," Bergen said.

"It's going to have an impact, but I don't have any doubt that somebody else is going to pick up the slack. There are new studios and things do come and go, but there's no doubt they'll be missed." MORGAN MODJESKI/METRO

Backlash

U of S TransformUS cuts questioned in open letter

Faculty and students at the University of Saskatchewan are expressing disillusionment with their administration.

An open letter submitted to the president of the university on Jan. 31 is objecting to the TransformUS process, which is attempting to cut about $25 million from the operational budget before a projected deficit in 2016.

So far the letter has received around 150 signatures.

"I've been a professor for more than 20 years and morale is as bad as it's ever been," said Len Findlay, a supporter of the letter.

He added there has been a lack of transparency and accountability in explaining the financial crisis.

"Who is responsible for this?" Findlay asked.

Another main qualm with TransformUS, said Findlay, is the model for program prioritization was too narrow to qualify as adequate peer review.

Franz-Viktor Kuhlmann, a math professor who was instrumental in drafting the letter, said he wants "the administration to acknowledge this was a flawed process."

But Greg Fowler, vice-president of finance and resources, said these criticisms are rooted in misconceptions and the university has released an official response.

"It's not about blame," said Fowler. "We were completely open in terms of this process."

And while the TransformUS proposals were executed with help from both academic and administrative staff members, he said that "it simply wasn't a peer-review academic exercise, it was a program prioritization exercise."

To view the full letter as well as the university's response, go to metronews.ca. JACOB MORGAN/METRO

Olympics. Canada to 'keep an eye' on Russian involvement in Ukraine

Canada will be keeping a close eye on Russia's involvement in the turbulent Ukraine as the Winter Olympics get ready to begin in Sochi, says Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird.

Canada will continue to vigilantly monitor developments in Ukraine as the world spotlight shifts to Russia this week, Baird told a news conference Monday.

"The Olympics are an exciting time for the athletes, for the world and for the Olympic spirit. We will very much be keeping an eye on the situation throughout Ukraine," he said.

"We will not be taking our eye off Ukraine for one moment during the Sochi Games."

Baird also registered Canada's outrage at the barbaric kidnapping of an opposition activist who was reportedly crucified by his Ukrainian captors.

"The abduction and abuse of pro-democracy activists is a cruel and crude attempt to deter peaceful protest through fear," he said in a statement. "We call for an independent investigation into this case and all other crimes against protesters." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird talks about the situation in the Ukraine in Ottawa on Jan. 28. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Not so sweet. Sugar consumption linked to fatal heart problems

Could too much sugar be deadly? The biggest study of its kind suggests the answer is yes, at least when it comes to fatal heart problems.

It doesn't take all that much extra sugar, hidden in many processed foods, to substantially raise the risk, the researchers found, and most Americans eat more than the safest amount.

For most U.S. adults, sodas and other sugary drinks are the main source of added sugar.

Adults who got at least 25 per cent of their calories from added sugar were almost three times more likely to die of heart problems than those who consumed less than 10 per cent. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cat café coming to Vancouver in fall

The right catmosphere. New Vancouver space will allow people to socialize with cats while surfing the net

EMILY JACKSON
Metro in Vancouver

A café just for cat lovers may pawssibly be coming to Vancouver.

Michelle Furbacher is applying for a business licence to open the "Catfé," a space where people will be able to socialize with cats while surfing the net or reading a book.

Cat cafés are wildly popular in Tokyo where dozens of shops charge customers a per-hour fee to hang out with feline furriends while lapping up lattes. The concept has yet to take off in North America, but entrepreneurs are planning to open such venues in Montreal, San Francisco and Oakland, Calif.

Videos of the Japanese cafés inspired Furbacher's Catfé, which will act as a foster home for cats from animal shelters, she told Metro on Monday.

"People will meet the cats, fall in love with them and maybe want to adopt them," Furbacher said, adding the cats will be vaccinated, fixed and screened by a vet before being chosen for the café, which could open as soon as September.

Furry friends

"People will meet the cats, fall in love with them and maybe want to adopt them."

Michelle Furbacher, on her plan for her future cat café to act as a foster home for cats.

"They have to have the right kind of personality, that likes hanging out with a lot of humans and a lot of other cats."

The café will also be a place where people who aren't allowed to have pets can get quality kitty time.

Furbacher knows how hard it can be for cat-loving renters to find a home where pets aren't banned. When her cat Peanut died two years ago, her landlord told her she was no longer allowed a pet in the building. She has since become a live-in cat sitter and is starting this venture as a new way to work with cats.

Furbacher has yet to find a location for the Catfé, but is in talks with lawyers and animal shelters to hammer out the business model.

"Obviously cleanliness is going to be a huge issue," she said, noting that Canada's stricter food and safety regulations could make it "next to impossible" to legally have a kitchen with so many cats meandering about.

Furbacher's shop will instead focus on providing Wi-Fi, a small library and event space.

"If we can get away with it, we'll serve bottled drinks and packaged foods bought off-site," she said.

Michelle Furbacher and a cat-sitting charge. COURTESY MICHELLE FURBACHER

And while customers will be able to enjoy the catmosphere, they will have to leave their kittens at home to avoid cat fights.

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Get ready for cool runnings

Running in a winter wonderland. First step is the worst, says expert with ice in her veins

JACOB MORGAN
jacob.morgan@metronews.ca

With Canada having experienced a brutal cold snap from coast to coast at the outset of 2014, the rest of the country could learn a thing or two from the folks in the Prairies.

Lisette Schermann is the manager of the Brainsport store, a staple of Saskatoon's Broadway Avenue. She says that when the temperatures dip far below zero, there is no reason to sit inside and sulk.

Instead, try going for a brisk run on the tundra.

"The hardest part is getting out there," she said. "Once you're outside it's not nearly as bad as you think."

There are many common misconceptions when it comes to winter running, said Schermann. For instance, newbies tend to assume they're going to feel as cold as they do when walking from the front door to the car.

"People definitely overdress," she said. "They're judging it on experiences of walking or driving in the cold where you're not producing as much body heat."

However, she said that doesn't mean would-be winter runners don't need to "step up their game, gear-wise."

Some must-have items: sneakers with cleats for traction on the ice, reflective materials for visibility during those long winter nights and a balaclava to protect your face from the windchill.

Once that's done, it's time to hit the snow.

But make sure not to start off with heavy speed work, as Schermann said the frigid weather can extend average paces by 10 per cent.

"You only really have to be aware of that the first few runs and then you get your snow legs," she said.

And when the season is done, Schermann said many runners are ahead of the game.

Even if you're not looking for a challenge, Schermann said a nice jog can be a great cure for the winter blues.

"There aren't that many opportunities to get outside in the winter time, and running is a really easy one."

Truth or dare

Truth: In order to gain traction on the ice, you need shoes designed with proper grip and insulation.

- **Dare:** Try the DIY approach with screws in the soles and duct tape on the tips for extra heat.

Truth: When you first get started with winter running, your average pace could slow down by about 10 per cent.

- **Dare:** By the end of the season, try to beat the speed you have in the summer.

Truth: One of the best parts of winter running is getting outside to explore nature.

- **Dare:** Find the very best trails in your city and run them all before the last of the snow melts away.

Metro asked: What's your winter running pet peeve?

"Just the ice is sometimes trouble for me. ... They make grips for your shoes or people screw actual screws into their shoes."

Jillian Joan, 23, Brooks Running Company employee, Alberta

"Definitely the windchill. It's probably the worst thing. Everything else seems pretty good though."

Kristen Christensen, 30s, rec programmer, Saskatoon

"When winter runners unexpectedly run across an intersection ... as a driver on icy roads I don't have enough time to necessarily stop."

Dave Cazakoff, 28, student, Saskatoon

"When I don't have the right wind-breaking material and my legs get really cold. The front of my thighs burn from being so cold."

Crystal Clarke, 34, librarian, Saskatoon

"I run around near the residential areas and sometimes people don't shovel their walks so you'll be running into deep snow."

Benjamin Lam, 27, engineer, Saskatoon

"When people don't get out of your way, even when you call out. ... Running through a snow drift is not a whole lot of fun."

Becky Mang, 33, engineer, Regina

Must-have gear

Hat

SUGOI Snowflake Tuke. Doesn't have to be too thick, as long as it covers the ears.

Balaclava

Saucony DryLete Balaclava. Features mesh over the mouth for breathability.

Gloves

SUGOI Wind Mitt. Warmer than gloves. For an extra layer, try wearing gloves underneath the mitts.

Base layer

Helly Hansen Warm. Merino wool to stay fresher smelling.

Mid layer

SUGOI Women's Speedster 3 Performance Hoodie. Features a ponytail hole in the hood.

Outer layer

SUGOI Jackie Thermal Jacket. Windproof panels over the sleeves and a fleecy breathable back. Lots of pockets.

Pants

Salomon Nova Softshell pant. Warmest pant at Brainsport.

Ankle

SUGOI Resistor Run Gaiter. Keeps snow out of shoes.

Sneaker

Saucony Ride running shoe. (Note: this model is using regular grip so as not to damage the grip on the winter shoes during a test run.)

JACOB MORGAN/METRO

Police officers escort children away from School No. 263 in Moscow on Monday after an incident in which investigators said an armed teenager killed a teacher and a policeman before being taken into custody. ALEXANDER ZEMLIANICHENKO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Student goes on shooting spree

Weapons of choice. In addition to the small-calibre rifle, the shooter was carrying a short-barrelled rifle

A 10th-grade student with two rifles burst into his Moscow school on Monday, killing his geography teacher and a policeman in front of about 20 students, investigators said. His father played a key role in freeing those students before police stormed the classroom and took his son into custody, the city police chief said.

The student gunman also seriously wounded a second police officer who had responded to an alarm from the school, investigators said.

None of the approximately 400 children in School No. 263 at the time were hurt, said Karina Sabitova, a police spokeswoman. But students were so fearful that some ran from the building with their teachers without stopping to put on coats in below-freezing temperatures. The school in northeast Moscow is for children in grades one through 11.

The ethnic Russian teenager entered the school after threatening its security guard, who managed to hit an alarm before following the student to his classroom, said Vladimir Markin, spokesman for Russia's Investigative Committee, its main investigative agency.

"Without saying a word, he fired several shots at the geography teacher," Markin said.

The shooter fired at least 11 times from a small-calibre rifle, also killing one police officer and wounding a second, Markin said.

The youth's father was immediately called to the school. He spoke to his son on the phone for 15 minutes to try to persuade him to let the 20 or so students in the classroom leave, but the boy refused, Moscow police chief Anatoly Yakunin said in televised remarks.

The father, wearing a bullet-proof vest provided by police, then went into the classroom. About 30 minutes later, the trapped students walked out, leaving the father and son alone in the classroom, and police special forces stormed in, Yakunin said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Heavy security, gay rights issue won't detract from Games: IOC

Heavy security and Russia's anti-gay law should not detract from the Sochi Olympics, IOC President Thomas Bach said Monday.

Bach also reiterated his defence of Russia's massive spending on the Winter Games, saying the money is going to the long-term transformation of the region.

Speaking at a news conference four days before the opening ceremony, Bach again voiced his backing for Russia's ability to deliver a safe Olympics amid threats of terror attacks by Islamic militants from the North Caucasus.

Tens of thousands of military and police personnel have been deployed to protect the games, as well as warships, anti-missile batteries and drone aircraft.

"Every big event nowadays is under threat, whether it's a political summit or a big convention," Bach said. "We have to address this because anything else would be surrender to terrorists and this is the last thing we all want to do."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

International Olympic Committee President Thomas Bach.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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TRANSIT TUESDAY

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The Saskatoon Transit and Access Transit fares that were approved as part of the 2014 City of Saskatoon Budget will be in effect starting February 1, 2014.
The new fees are as follows:

- Single transit tickets will increase $0.10 for adults, students and children making the new rates $2.40, $1.80 and $1.40.
- Monthly pass fares will also increase, for adults it will increase from $78 to $81; students $56 to $57; children $47 to $48; and for seniors $26 to $27.
- Cash fares will increase by $0.10 to $3.10 per ride for an adult, $2.60 for a student, and $2.10 for a child.

For more information on Saskatoon Transit fares, routes and schedules, call 306-975-3100 and speak to a Customer Service Representative. Access Transit customers can call 306-975-3555 for further information.

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Vancouver deputy mayor meets IOC execs to talk LGBTQ rights

Sochi. Meeting with IOC president's senior staffers proves hopeful

KATE WEBB
Metro in Vancouver

Jochem Farber, left, head of the IOC president's executive office, meets with Vancouver Deputy Mayor Tim Stevenson, IOC director of communications Mark Adams, and former VANOC spokeswoman Maureen Douglas in Sochi, Russia, on Monday. COURTESY IAN JONES/IOC

It took Vancouver Deputy Mayor Tim Stevenson just three days after arriving in Sochi, Russia to get what he came for: A meeting at the office of the president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The openly gay city councillor travelled across the world with the full backing of his hometown, a former Olympic host city, to urge the IOC to add sexual orientation to its charter among other unacceptable forms of discrimination.

He came away hopeful it will do just that.

"I'm pinching myself a bit," he told Metro on Monday in a phone call from the subtropical Russian city, just hours after meeting with two of the IOC president's senior staffers.

"It's far more hopeful, and I am far more positive than I thought I would be."

Stevenson explained that the new president himself, German fencer Thomas Bach, is busy meeting with heads of state and his executive board until the Games kick off Feb. 7.

But Stevenson was thrilled regardless to be able to sit down for 75 minutes with Jochem Farber, the head of the president's executive office, as well as IOC director of communications Mark Adams.

"They basically said that with the new president, Bach, he is instituting a whole renewal program of the IOC and everything is on the table for discussion with the members, including sexual orientation," Stevenson said.

The sweeping review, known as "Olympic Agenda 2020," began in December and will be discussed in the coming days by the 100-plus members of the IOC. It will culminate in December with a huge conference and vote in Monaco. WITH FILES FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"It's far more hopeful, and I am far more positive than I thought I would be."

Vancouver Deputy Mayor Tim Stevenson, on his meeting to urge the IOC to amend its charter to include sexual orientation.

Boy was chained up, starved, beaten: Crown

A 10-year-old boy who died in the care of his father and stepmother was kept chained to his bed, stomped on and starved, prosecutors alleged Monday in the first day of the couple's murder trial.

Autopsy results showed "injuries on top of injuries" and open wounds on Shakeil Boothe's emaciated body, as well as clear signs of infection in his lungs and blood stream, Crown lawyer Kelly Slate told a Toronto-area court.

The boy's death was caused by a combination of blunt-force injuries, malnutrition, pneumonia and other infections, she said in her opening statement.

Shakeil's lifeless body was found on May 27, 2011, in the family's Brampton, Ont., home, court heard.

The boy's father, Garfield Boothe, and stepmother, Nichelle Boothe-Rowe, are charged with second-degree murder.

Garfield Boothe was originally charged with failing to provide the necessities of life but that charge was later upgraded to second-degree murder.

Shakeil Boothe CONTRIBUTED

Nichelle Boothe-Rowe was previously facing a manslaughter charge.

Shakeil left his grandmother's care in Jamaica in 2009 to come live with his father in search of a better life, Slate said. Instead, he was dead within two years of his arrival.

Slate said the boy was an "obviously sick, malnourished child" at the time of his death.

"Shakeil did not get to that state overnight."

Boothe and Boothe-Rowe "had an obligation to care for their 10-year-old son once he came to Canada," she said.

But things changed once the couple had a son of their own — an infant born in September of 2010, Slate argued.

Neighbours noticed Shakeil, previously viewed as a "happy but shy and quiet boy," wasn't seen playing outside or going to school, she said. They were told he was inside playing video games, she said.

And public health nurses who visited to help Boothe-Rowe with the baby "saw no sign of another child living in the house," Slate said.

Boothe called 911 the afternoon of May 27 to report Shakeil wasn't conscious or breathing.

Paramedics testified Monday they found the boy lying in bed, frigid and stiff and foaming at the mouth, suggesting he had been dead for a while.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Surveillance. CSEC chief denies agency breached Canadians' privacy

The head of Canada's eavesdropping agency says an effort to understand airport wireless systems did not breach the privacy of Canadians.

John Forster told a Senate committee that Communications Security Establishment Canada (CSEC) was merely collecting metadata, or data about data, and not the content of messages.

A document obtained by CBC indicates the pilot project was intended to help the agency locate kidnappers and terrorists.

The CSEC slide presentation suggests information was taken from an unidentified Canadian airport's free Wi-Fi system over a two-week period.

Forster says the agency was trying to build a mathematical model to help determine a communication pattern at a public location, in this case an airport. He says the model has subsequently been used in at least two cases to identify legitimate foreign targets.

Ottawa-based CSEC monitors foreign computer, satellite, radio and telephone traffic of people, states, organizations and terrorist groups for information of intelligence interest to Canada.

It is a key player in the Five Eyes intelligence network that includes partner agencies from the United States, Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CSEC Chief John Forster prepares to appear before the Senate National Security and Defence committee in Ottawa Monday. FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dramatic increase

WHO predicts rise in cancer cases

The World Health Organization's cancer agency warns there will be 22 million new cases of cancer every year within the next two decades.

A report Monday estimated there were 14 million new cases in 2012, but predicted that figure would jump due to global aging and the spread of cancers to developing nations.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lev Tahor children

Kids must return to Quebec: Judge

An Ontario judge has ruled that children from an ultra-Orthodox Jewish sect, who left Quebec while the community was being investigated by social services, should be returned to that province.

Members of the Lev Tahor community, in Ste-Agathe-des-Monts, Que., were under investigation last year for issues including children's health and allegations that the kids weren't learning according to the provincial curriculum.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Super Bowl

Fans waited hours for trains

The head of New Jersey Transit defended the agency's response to a huge bottleneck that left thousands of fans waiting for trains for hours after the Super Bowl.

More than 30,000 people rode trains between MetLife Stadium and Secaucus Junction. That's double the highest estimates made by organizers before the game.

NJ Transit executive director James Weinstein said about 30 buses deployed as a contingency measure took about 2,000 fans back to Secaucus.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Antarctica

Japanese whaler, protest ship collide

A Japanese whaling ship and an anti-whaling protest boat collided in the remote, icy seas off Antarctica, with both sides on Monday blaming each other for the crash.

No one was injured, though both ships received minor damage in Sunday's collision, the latest drama in an annual battle between the conservationists and the whalers.

Sea Shepherd said the whaling vessels spent hours dragging steel cables across the bows of the Sea Shepherd's ships in a bid to damage the rudders and propellers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

San Francisco Bay

Google barge must go: Agency

A California state agency says Google must move its mystery barge from a construction site on an island in the middle of the San Francisco Bay because the permits are not in order.

San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission said it received multiple complaints about the construction of the floating, four-storey building.

Planning documents showed plans for Google to build an interactive space for people to learn about technology. It had been speculated the barge would be a party boat or store to sell Google glasses. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Man facing jail time for cat-throwing video

Oscar the cat is pictured in Marseille, France, Monday. Officials say a 24-year-old man accused of injuring the kitten by throwing it against an apartment building, then uploading a video clip of the act on his Facebook profile is being prosecuted for animal cruelty and faces up to two years in prison and a $40,500 fine. The Marseille animal welfare society office says it is treating Oscar for a broken foot and a stomach injury suffered in the attacks, which occurred after the accused found the kitten on a street. The owner later recovered his pet and brought it to the SPA for treatment. CLAUDE PARIS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Greatest tale of survival at sea — if proven true

Survivor. Spanish-speaking man says he drifted 13 months across Pacific Ocean in a 7-metre fishing boat

It's a story that almost defies belief: A man leaves Mexico in December 2012 for a day of fishing sharks and ends up surviving 13 months on fish, birds and turtles before washing ashore on the remote Marshall Islands thousands of kilometres away.

But that's what a man identifying himself as 37-year-old Jose Salvador Alvarenga told officials Monday a week after he washed ashore on the tiny atoll of Ebon in the Pacific Ocean.

Officials reacted cautiously to the Spanish-speaking man's story while they try to piece together more information.

The soft-spoken man complained of joint pain and had a limp but was able to walk. He had long hair and a beard, and rather than appearing emaciated he looked puffy in places, including around his ankles. Otherwise, he seemed in reasonable health.

Gee Bing, the acting secretary of foreign affairs for the Marshall Islands, said he was somewhat skeptical of Alvarenga's account after meeting with him Monday. "When we saw him, he was not really thin compared to other survivors in the past," he said.

Bing said the man had no identification, and other details of his story remained sketchy.

The survivor said he's a native of El Salvador but had lived in Mexico for 15 years and fishes for a man he knows as Willie, catching sharks.

On Dec. 21, 2012, Alvarenga said he left Mexico in his 7-metre fiberglass boat for a day's fishing, accompanied by a teen he knew only as Ezekiel, who was between 15 and 18. A storm blew the fishermen off course, and soon they were lost and adrift. After about a month, Ezekiel died, the survivor told officials.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Other cases

There have been other cases of people surviving for months adrift.

- Three Mexican shark fishermen in 2006 said they were lost at sea for nine months before being rescued near the Marshall Islands.
- In 1989, four men survived nearly four months in the Pacific Ocean near New Zealand after their boat capsized.

Woody Allen. Allies cast doubt on abuse claims by adoptive daughter

Some of Woody Allen's allies have come to his defence, casting doubt on renewed accusations by Dylan Farrow that she was sexually assaulted by her then-adoptive father when she was 7.

Allen's lawyer, studio and publicist weighed in on Farrow's open letter, published online Saturday by The New York Times.

The movie director's publicist, Leslee Dart, said in an email that Allen would fight the claims dating back to Allen's tempestuous relationship with actress Mia Farrow in the early 1990s.

Allen was investigated on child molestation claims for the 1992 accusation but was never charged.

Dylan Farrow's open letter didn't urge renewed legal action but a retrial for Allen in the court of public opinion. Farrow argued for fans of Allen's movies and actors who star in his films not to "turn a blind eye."

But on Sunday, Sony Pictures Classics, which regularly distributes Allen's films including his latest, Blue Jasmine, urged caution in any rush to judgment. "Mr. Allen has never been charged in relationship to any of this, and therefore deserves our presumption of innocence."

Alec Baldwin, who has starred in Allen films including Blue Jasmine, was among those Farrow singled out in her letter. Baldwin responded on Twitter: "You are mistaken if you think there is a place for me, or any outsider, in this family's issue."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"The one to blame for Dylan's distress is neither Dylan nor Woody Allen."

Elkan Abramowitz, Allen's lawyer, saying it was tragic that after 20 years a story "engineered by a vengeful lover" resurfaces after it was rejected by authorities.

Purple Works
in Health Care

SEIU-West members who are a part of the therapeutic recreation team work to provide organized activities that enrich the quality of life of clients, patients and residents.

PurpleWorks.ca

Central African Republic sees violence in capital, countryside

Seventy-five dead in a single town. Intense sectarian fighting breaks out in Bangui

Clashes between Muslim and Christian residents have left at least 75 people dead in a single town, a local priest said Monday, while heavy fighting broke out between rebels and peacekeepers in the capital.

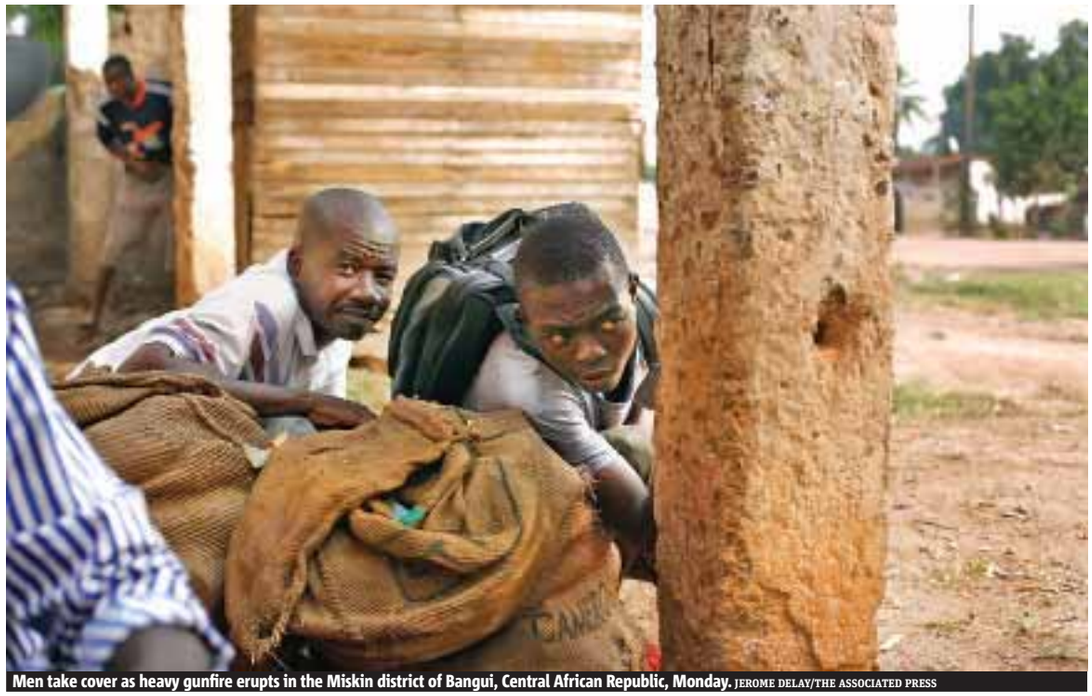
In Bangui, Muslim militias engaged Burundian troops who returned fire in some of the heaviest fighting since France sent peacekeepers to its former colony in early December.

Some 1,600 French and 5,000 African peacekeepers are struggling to keep a lid on the violence. An untold number of people have been slain across the country since March 2013 when heavily armed rebels overthrew the president of a decade, setting off sectarian violence.

Father Cassien Kamatari told The Associated Press on Monday that fighting had erupted five days ago in the town of Boda, about 100 kilometres outside Bangui. Muslim victims were buried soon after the attacks so it was not known how many of them were also killed in addition to the toll given by the priest.

"Instead of thinking only of Bangui, people must also think of what's happening in the countryside, because what we are living through in these communities is horrific," he said.

Several months after the president was overthrown, the armed Muslim fighters were also being blamed for carrying out massacres on predominantly Christian villages in the country's remote northwest. An armed Christian movement known as the anti-Balaka arose in opposition to the Muslim rebels and its fighters are also accused of carrying out scores of human rights abuses. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Men take cover as heavy gunfire erupts in the Miskin district of Bangui, Central African Republic, Monday. JEROME DELAY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Thai protesters continue push to nullify election

Supporters of the anti-government protest movement wait to catch a glimpse of passing leader Suthep Thaugsuban during a march through Bangkok, Thailand, Monday. WALLY SANTANA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Anti-government protesters in Thailand vowed Monday to stage larger rallies in central Bangkok and push ahead with efforts to nullify an election they disrupted, preventing millions of people from voting.

Despite fears of violence, voting proceeded peacefully in 90 per cent of polling stations Sunday. The protesters forced polling booths to close in Bangkok and southern Thailand, leaving some legislative seats unfilled. As a result, a series of special elections are required to complete the balloting, extending the country's political paralysis for months. Election results will not be announced until all areas have successfully voted.

After sabotaging the election process, the protesters and their allies said they will go to court to try to get the polls nullified on several grounds, including that they were not completed in one day.

The opposition Democrat Party, which backs the protesters and boycotted the vote, said Monday it is studying other legal justifications to invalidate the election as well.

The struggle to hold the balloting was part of a 3-month-old conflict that has split the country between supporters of Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra and opponents, who allege her government is too corrupt to rule, and that she is a puppet of her brother, ousted Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. Thaksin fled into exile to avoid a corruption conviction after being deposed in a 2006 military coup. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pressing on

The demonstrators have occupied major intersections in Bangkok and forced government ministries to shut down and work elsewhere.

- **"We are not giving up the fight," protest leader Suthep Thaugsuban said.** "Our mission is to keep shutting down government offices, so don't ask us to give those back."

Cairo

Egyptian TV airs video of Al Jazeera journalists' arrests

Accompanied by a music score, an Egyptian TV channel has aired a video of the arrest and initial interrogation of two Al Jazeera journalists at a Cairo hotel, escalating a campaign by the country's authorities against the network.

The nearly 22-minute video began with the network's Canadian-Egyptian acting bureau chief in Cairo, Mohamed Fahmy, looking stunned as he opens the door of the hotel suite for security men. It ends with a shot of Fahmy and Australian correspondent Peter Greste being taken away in a minivan. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi

Al-Qaida splits with branch commander

Al-Qaida's central leadership broke with one of its most powerful branch commanders in an apparent attempt to stem the deadly infighting that has erupted in Syria among the militant Islamic factions trying to bring down President Bashar Assad.

The dispute is between al-Qaida's central leadership and a faction known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant.

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the head of al-Qaida's branch in Iraq, formed the Islamic State last spring to expand his operations into neighbouring Syria, defying direct orders by al-Qaida leader Ayman al-Zawahiri not to do so. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Muslim Brotherhood

Mohammed Badie referred to trial

Egyptian prosecutors on Monday referred to trial Mohammed Badie, leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, and 50 others on charges of inciting supporters to resist security forces during an August crackdown against them. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mohammed Badie
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

The glass ceiling. Yellen sworn in as first female U.S. Federal Reserve chair

Janet Yellen was sworn in Monday to succeed Ben Bernanke, becoming the first woman to lead the U.S. Federal Reserve in its 100-year history.

Yellen, who was confirmed by the Senate last month, was sworn in by Fed Governor Daniel Tarullo, the senior member of the Fed's seven-member board.

She took the oath in a brief ceremony in front of a fireplace in the Fed's massive board room. Her husband, Nobel-winning economist George Akerloff, was present, as were other Fed board members and Fed staff.

Yellen, 67, made no remarks at her swearing in but did smile to acknowledge the applause of the assembled group.

Nominated by President Barack Obama on Oct. 9, her four-year term as chairman will end on Feb. 3, 2018.

Meanwhile, the Brookings Institution, announced Monday that Bernanke was joining the Washington think-tank as a distinguished fellow in residence.

Janet Yellen smiles after being sworn in on Monday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

$389,119!? Canadian home prices overvalued by 10%: TD Bank report

Canadian home prices are likely about 10 per cent overvalued given the expectations for rising interest rates, TD Bank said in a report Monday.

However, the bank also noted that the overvaluation in markets like Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal and Ottawa is likely more significant than in others across the country.

"These markets will likely feel the pinch from modestly higher interest rates over the next two years more so than others," TD economist Diana Petramala wrote in the report.

She noted that Montreal, Quebec City and Ottawa have been flooded with an overhang of inventory of unsold condos.

"Home prices have weakened in the second half of 2013 as a result and we expect that softness to persist in 2014," Petramala said.

The Canadian housing market and worries about a real estate bubble have been key concerns for policy-makers for several years. Recent indicators have suggested the market may be headed for a soft landing instead of a bubble bursting, but concerns have persisted.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bubble set to burst?

The Canadian Real Estate Association reported sales through its multiple listings service totalled 457,893 homes for 2013, up eight-tenths of a per cent from 2012.

- The national average price for homes sold in December was $389,119, up 10.4 per cent from the end of 2012. Excluding Greater Vancouver and the Toronto region, the year-over-year increase was 4.6 per cent.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg is seen at Facebook headquarters in Menlo Park, Calif., last April. JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Growing pains as Facebook hits 10

In an awkward phase. As the social media site enters its tweens, it aims to be effortlessly hip as whippersnappers like Snapchat bite at its heels

KIERON MONKS
Metro World News in London

When a 2013 academic paper suggested Facebook could swiftly go the way of MySpace, the social media giant was able to laugh off the claims, showing that its client base was growing while the university in question was sliding.

Marking 10 years on February 4, Mark Zuckerberg's baby has reasons to celebrate. Over one billion of us now hold accounts, with a steady increase in monthly users in every region of the world. Stock value has soared past $150 billion after a disastrous initial flotation.

Yet there are growing threats to the global leader. Facebook's recent output; a flurry of recent apps such as 'Paper', which makes reading easier and integrates with Instagram; and 'Messenger', a no-frills riff on Snapchat, show the company is aware its crown is slipping in a white-hot competitive market.

Teenage users are down 25% in the last three years, and the company's own research highlighted "decrease in daily users, specifically among teens" as a leading concern. The classic formula is no longer enough, and the company is responding with creative gambles.

Zuckerberg himself suggested it would take the next "three to five years" to transition from web to mobile company, in which time rivals such as Twitter and Instagram could have continued their rapid expansion alongside new competitors.

But Facebook's sheer size will prove an advantage says Nate Elliott, senior analyst at Forrester Research. "Every day they are giving people more reasons to come back, whether through their own innovations or stealing others."

Staying on trend

"Facebook is under massive pressure to keep changing and I expect to see a vast new ecosystem of standalone apps for different purposes."

Matthew Rhodes, digital-strategy consultant

Market Minute

DOLLAR 90.11¢ (+0.33¢)

Natural gas: $4.96 US (+$0.11)
Dow Jones: 15,372.80 (-326.05)

TSX 13,486.20 (-208.74)

OIL $96.43 US (-$1.06)

GOLD $1,259.90 US (+ $20.10)

IMF report

Tories can loosen grip on budget

The federal government can loosen its efforts to balance the budget by 2015 in the event of an economic downturn, the International Monetary Fund said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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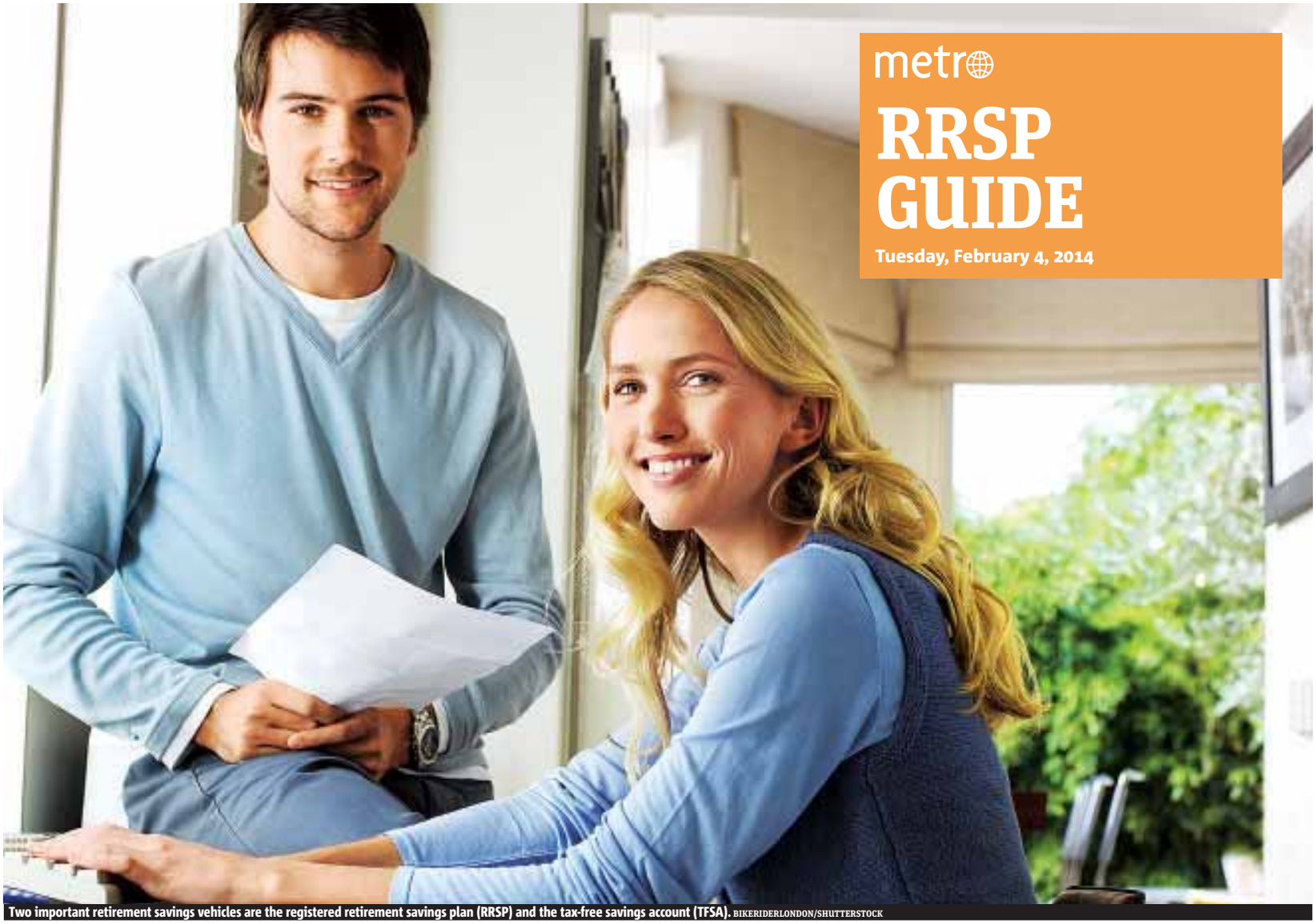
RRSP GUIDE
Tuesday, February 4, 2014



Two important retirement savings vehicles are the registered retirement savings plan (RRSP) and the tax-free savings account (TFSA). BIKERIDERLONDON/SHUTTERSTOCK

Get your financial future in shape

"Every January, Canadians start thinking about getting fit. And every February, even though we should be thinking about it all year, most Canadians start thinking about retirement," says Dean Owen, a Saskatoon-based financial adviser with Advocis, the Financial Advisors Association of Canada.

Two important retirement savings vehicles are the registered retirement savings plan (RRSP) and the tax-free savings account (TFSA).

RRSPs were introduced by the federal government in 1957 to allow you to save for the future on a tax-sheltered basis. A big advantage is that contributions are tax deductible the year they are made, Owen said.

"And that gives you an immediate break on your tax bill."

But you will have to pay tax when you withdraw funds from your RRSP down the road. The amount is added to your income that year and taxed at regular rates. There may also be old age security clawbacks based on income.

"Withdrawing from your RRSP may push you into an income bracket where old age security is reduced."

Contribution amounts

- **RRSPs:** 18 per cent of the previous year's earned income
- **TFSAs:** Up to $5,500 plus any unused contribution room from previous years (up to $5,000 annually from 2009 to 2012)
- Unused contributions for both can be carried forward

The TFSA was introduced in 2008 and is also a registered account with the federal government. The benefit of a TFSA is that it allows your investment income and capital gains to grow tax-free, Owen said.

"You're never taxed on the growth, and any withdrawal is tax-free."

Also, TFSA funds will not affect eligibility for federal income benefits such as old age security.

The main disadvantage for many people is that TFSA contributions are not tax deductible when you contribute the money.

RRSP or TFSA?

It can be tough to balance the benefits against the disadvantages of both, Owen said.

What's important is that you look at both in relation to your personal financial goals and situation.

"My general recommendation is that people with an income over $50,000 invest in both RRSPs and TFSAs. But if your income is below $40,000, an RRSP may not be your first or best choice."

YLVA VAN BUUREN

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Investors should be aware of RRSP mistakes and avoid them when it comes to savings plans. OLESYA FEKETA/SHUTTERSTOCK

Understanding RRSPs

TALBOT BOGGS
Smart Investing

The registered retirement savings plan (RRSP) is a popular vehicle for Canadians to save money on a tax-deferred basis for their retirement.

But RRSPs are not a retirement panacea, and there are a few things investors should be aware of and avoid when it comes to their plans.

"It's really important to understand RRSPs, their benefits, why you should contribute and what you shouldn't do," said Chris Buttigieg, senior manager of wealth planning strategy with BMO Financial Group.

"A lot of people make contributions but don't really understand some of the consequences of RRSPs, such as early withdrawals and benefits like tax-deferred growth."

Perhaps the biggest no-no associated with RRSPs is to withdraw money for any reason other than investing in the first-time homebuyers or lifelong learning plans, which allow you to withdraw certain amounts of money from your RRSP to buy your first home or go back to school and repay it within a certain period of time without paying tax.

The government taxes other early withdrawals very heavily. And there are other penalties.

Once you withdraw the money it is considered income and will be added to your total income, which you are taxed on as well.

Once you have withdrawn the money it is removed from the contribution room available to you and you cannot re-contribute it later. If you have $30,000 contribution room and take out $15,000, you are left with only $15,000 of contribution room.

And once the money is out you have to start over again to save it and you lose the compounding growth that you could have received if it had stayed in.

Many RRSP investors make their contributions to get their tax refund but end up leaving the money sitting in cash where it will make little or no interest. It makes sense to talk to a financial adviser about building a portfolio in your RRSP to maximize gains and limit risk.

"Once you've made your contribution and get your refund why not apply it to some debt like a mortgage or invest it in a tax-free savings account — it's like hitting two birds with one stone," Buttigieg said.

Many people also do not pay attention to their notice of assessment from the tax department after they have filed their income tax, which shows their RRSP deduction limit. You can overcontribute up to $2,000 for a year, but after that you are assessed a one per cent per month penalty.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TALBOT BOGGS IS A TORONTO-BASED BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSIONAL WHO HAS WORKED WITH NATIONAL NEWS ORGANIZATIONS, MAGAZINES AND CORPORATIONS IN THE FINANCE, RETAIL, MANUFACTURING AND OTHER INDUSTRIAL SECTORS.

Plan early for bigger benefits

It may seem like time is on your side right now, but the deadline for contributions to registered retirement savings plans will be here before we know it. To avoid the last-minute crunch, personal finance experts are pointing out the benefits of making contributions earlier than the March 3 deadline.

"By getting organized now, you can set yourself up for future financial success," said Wade Stayzer, vice-president of retail and investment services at Meridian, an Ontario credit union.

"A personalized financial plan with regular contributions being made to an RRSP over a long term is much more advantageous than making last-minute contributions. To get started, you need to be more proactive about your personal finances. Determine what your retirement goals are and work with a trusted financial adviser to build a plan that will help you achieve them."

Here's how to avoid rushed contributions this March.

Get a personalized financial plan: Choosing the right investment really depends on your personal financial goals.

Invest automatically: Put your savings on auto pilot. Many financial institutions provide pre-authorized contribution (PAC) plans, which automatically transfer funds from your chequing account into your savings investments at regular intervals.

NEWS CANADA

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	40	$24,000	$151,743
$200/mo.	20	$48,000	$70,610
	40	$96,000	$606,973

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PUTTING SEXY BACK IN SEXAGENARIAN

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

I've always hated the phrase "a woman of a certain age." It implies that once a woman has reached a point in her life when she is no longer considered youthful, her exact age is simply unspeakable.

Many of my friends are turning 30 this year (although some prefer to think of it as the first anniversary of their 29th birthday) and while I still have awhile to go before hit that milestone, I've already started noticing some of the inevitable signs of aging. At my mother's insistence, I recently began a nightly ritual involving anti-aging creams infused with retinol and other gravity-defying serums that I'm convinced have a bigger impact on my bank account than my face.

In honour of her 60th birthday, Christie Brinkley appeared on the cover of this week's People magazine looking absolutely flawless—albeit a bit unnaturally smooth—clad in a bold one-piece bathing suit.

Part of me wants to believe that there is an aging portrait of Brinkley rotting away in an attic somewhere, but the blond bombshell insists that her mostly vegan lifestyle and a "joie de vivre" are what keep her looking like a fresh-faced supermodel. Plus her rigorous exercise routine, monthly facials, numerous hair extensions and, of course, a little help from Adobe Photoshop.

Brinkley isn't the only sexagenarian baring her body in the news this week. American Apparel—a clothing retailer renowned for their envelope-pushing campaigns featuring lithe bodies in leotards—recently revealed a new lingerie ad featuring 62-year-old model Jacky O'Shaughnessy. Unlike Brinkley's magazine cover, this image shows a woman with grey hair, lines on her face and folds in her stomach, and she still looks like a total babe. O'Shaughnessy probably has incredible genetics on her side and — if I had to guess — a lifetime dedication to sunscreen, but looking at these striking images of a silver-haired beauty in lace underwear and bright red lipstick gives me hope for the future.

It's refreshing to see women like O'Shaughnessy in the media embracing their age rather than desperately trying to reconstruct their face into some unrecognizable Botox-filled version of their former selves. The older women in my life are some of the most beautiful people I know. Not because they are trying to look younger and deny their true age, but because they take pride in their appearance. When my great aunt passed away last year I can remember admiring how elegant she looked in the hospital bed dressed in her finest pearls, nails polished and her hair immaculately coiffed.

Aging can be a difficult process to come to terms with, but I would rather be who I am now than turn back the clock 10 years. I'll accept that teenage pimples give way to adult wrinkles and feel fortunate that I have such great memories behind each and every laugh line.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

ZOOM

Brazil's dark cloud makes waves

NASA

Microscopic life

An ominous-looking dark blotch has been spotted stretching 800 km along Brazil's Atlantic coast.

The black formation, pictured by Aqua, a NASA satellite that monitors Earth's water cycle, is actually a bloom made up of microscopic animals known as Myrionecta rubra. Viewed close up, the bloom is red, but a distortion of light on the water means it looks black from orbit. **METRO**

What is marine bloom?

- **Definition.** Fast accumulation in the population of algae in water.
- **Concentration.** Up to millions of cells per millilitre.
- **Cause.** Result of an excess of nutrients into waters. Higher concentrations of these nutrients lead to increased growth of algae and green plants.

Microorganisms steal from algae

Living a metre below the water surface, Myrionecta rubra are dubbed the thieves of the microbial world: Using a "straw," these fast-swimming unicellular organisms suck out chlorophyll from other algae, and then use the pigment for photosynthesis in order to obtain energy. However, Myrionecta rubra are not known to be toxic to other marine life or humans. **METRO**

Risk factor

Certain algal blooms can threaten other aquatic organisms and the safety of human drinking water. Blooms can cause damage by blocking sunlight and depleting oxygen required by other aquatic organisms, as well as produce potent toxins that can cause adverse health effects to wildlife and humans. **METRO**

Clickbait

DYLAN ROBERTSON
For Metro online

Planning your next vacation to a foreign land? These audio-translation apps may come in handy. Use your phone to order a beer, speak with cab drivers and even find sunscreen. Instant translation is literally in the palm of your hand.

Vocre:

Speak or type into your phone and have your phrases voiced out in 66 dialects. This app recognizes Canadian accents and slang, and can say your 'bon mots' in both France French and Quebec French. You can also have a slightly delayed conversation with this app. $4.99 for iOS, $1.02 for Android.

Google Translate:

This app lets you translate text instantly between 80 languages. You can also draw words in foreign scripts, like Cyrillic or Chinese, and have the text typed out. Free for iOS and Android.

Twitter

A man says he left Mexico this past December for a day of shark fishing and ended up spending 13 months surviving on fish, birds and turtles before washing ashore on the Marshall Islands thousands of kilometres away. How would you survive on the seas?

@MeToddScott: in the Pacific there are tonnes of plastic. They create mini reefs for fish. A net fragment and I'm in business.

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll. Best tweets published right here.

Comments

RE: Video: Light humour, emotional ads rule Super Bowl, published online Monday, Feb. 3, 2014

Not a single one of these commercials made it to our TV. There was a Bell ad, several Rogers ads, and a bunch of 1-4 year old commercials such as the Mountain Dew one where the guy's spine should be crushed from the head-first collision.

ijdfc, posted to metronews.ca

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:
Send us your comments: saskatoonletters@metronews.ca

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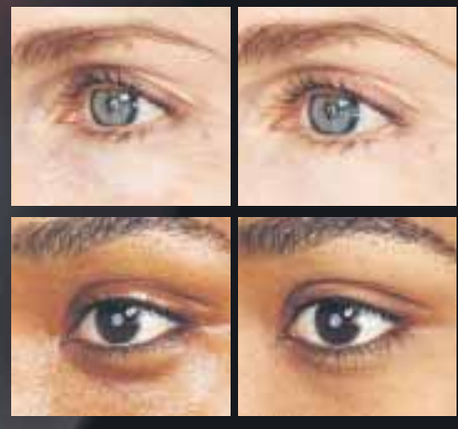

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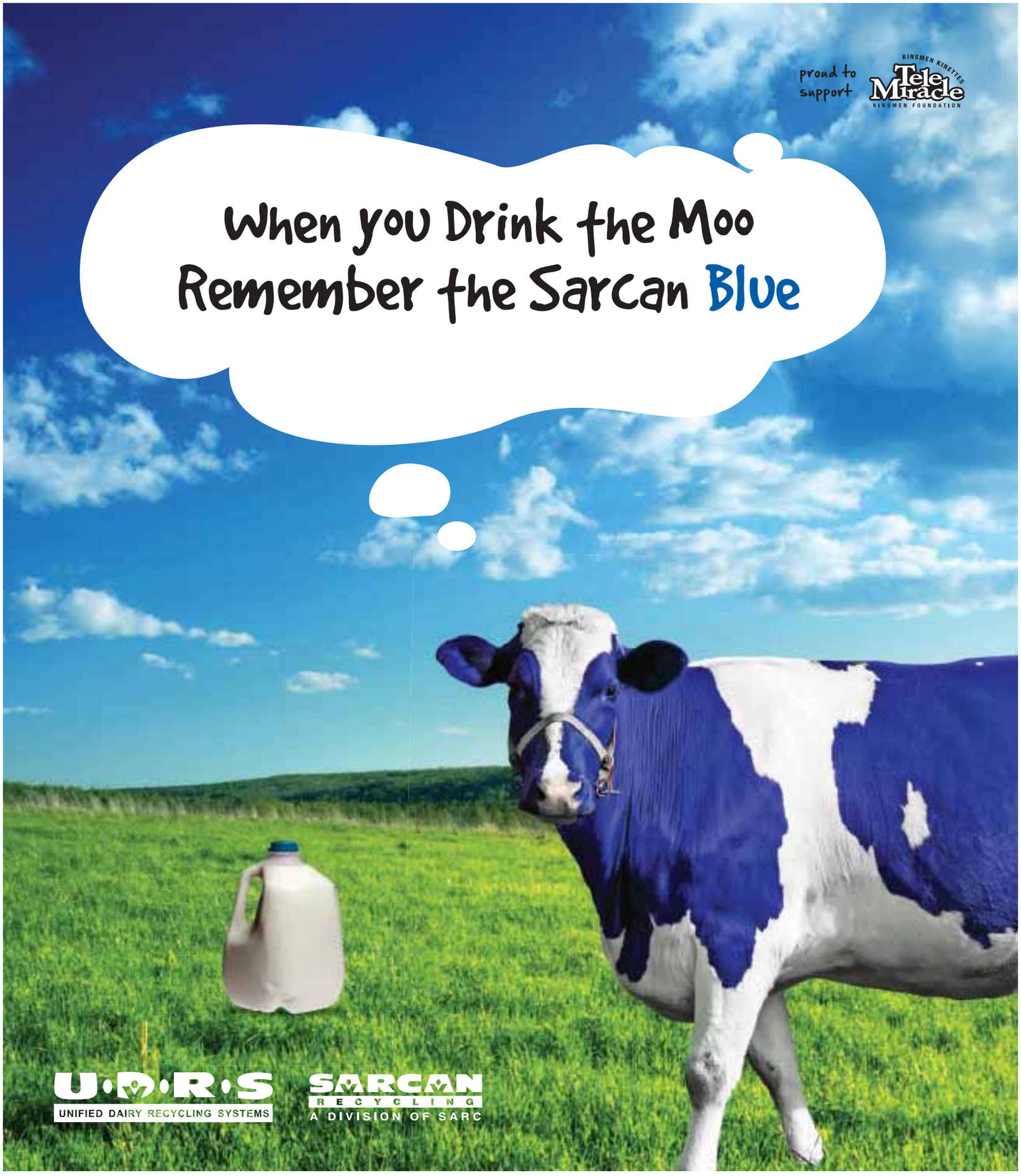
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DVD review

Dallas Buyers Club

Director. Jean-Marc Vallee

Stars. Matthew McConaughey, Jennifer Garner, Jared Leto

Matthew McConaughey becomes a hero to the afflicted and a villain to outraged authorities in this fact-based 1980s story of a Texas rodeo playboy who refuses to go quietly after HIV cuts him low. McConaughey lost some 40 pounds for the role of redeemable rogue Ron Woodroof, playing him with a faultless blend of vinegar and honey. Jared Leto is the other hero of this David versus Goliath drama, directed by Quebec's Jean-Marc Vallée. McConaughey and Leto have both been nominated for Oscars, deservedly so, at the March 2 Academy Awards.

PETER HOWELL

Investigation

Stamped drug bags found at Hoffman's house

A law enforcement official says tests have confirmed there was heroin in at least some of the dozens of plastic packets in a New York City apartment where Philip Seymour Hoffman was found dead.

Officials are working to determine whether the drug was mixed or tainted with anything else. An autopsy was being conducted Monday. Police have been investigating Hoffman's death as an apparent overdose. Law enforcement officials said he was found with a needle in his arm.

Two officials said Monday that at least four dozen small packets were found in the apartment. Some of the one-dose packets were stamped with the ace of hearts symbol, and others with the words "Ace of Spades" and that symbol, another law enforcement official said.

Stamps are common as a form of drug-world branding.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hoffman's Hunger Games role to remain untouched

'Devastating loss.'
Actor's castmates and co-workers mourn loss, but Hoffman's role in his final films will remain intact save for a small rewrite

RICHARD CROUSE
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Philip Seymour Hoffman played Plutarch Heavensbee in Catching Fire and the upcoming Mockingjay Part 1 and 2.
CONTRIBUTED

The news of Philip Seymour Hoffman's sudden passing was met with a heartfelt outpouring of grief from fans and those who worked with him.

"Philip Seymour Hoffman was a singular talent and one of the most gifted actors of our generation," Lionsgate, the studio behind the upcoming Hunger Games: Mockingjay Part 1 and 2, said in a written statement. "We're very fortunate that he graced our Hunger Games family. Losing him in his prime is a tragedy, and we send our deepest condolences to Philip's family."

Hoffman played head-games-maker-turned-rebel leader Plutarch Heavensbee in the successful series. It is a pivotal role.

In the wake of the actor's death, questions arose as to whether the uncompleted blockbusters-in-waiting would be completed in time for their scheduled November 21, 2014 for Part 1 and November 20, 2015 for Part 2 release dates.

Hollywood studios have handled the sudden death of cast members in many different ways. In some cases, films are even abandoned.

Production on Something's Got to Give was shut down permanently after Marilyn Monroe's August 1962 barbiturate overdose.

Dark Blood, River Phoenix's final film, was put into cold storage when the young actor died before filming several crucial scenes. But both movies were eventually resurrected. The documentary Marilyn: The Final Days used footage from Monroe's aborted film while Dark Blood sat for 19 years before being finished and shown at film festivals.

Father and son Bruce and Brandon Lee both died early, leaving behind unfinished films. The elder martial arts legend had completed 100 minutes of The Game of Death when a cerebral edema took his life.

Even more tragically, Brandon was killed on the set of The Crow in an accident involving a prop handgun.

Both films were salvaged with the use of stand-ins.

When Oliver Reed collapsed of a heart attack at a Malta pub after out-drinking a group of Royal Navy sailors, the editing crew of Gladiator replaced him digitally in the remaining scenes of the film.

More recently, Heath Ledger unexpectedly died during the production of The Imaginarium of Dr. Parnassus. He was replaced in the surreal story by three actors.

"I just started calling friends of Heath," director Terry Gilliam said. "It's as simple as that."

"Johnny (Depp), Colin (Farrell) and Jude (Law) turned up. It was important that they were friends, because I wanted to keep it in the family. I wanted people who were close to him because, as Colin said when he was doing his part, he was channelling Heath part of the time, so Heath was very much still alive in some sense.

"Contractually, it was supposed to be a Terry Gilliam Film," said Gilliam. "That's what the lawyers said, but I said, 'No way it's going to be that. It's going to be a film from Heath Ledger and friends.' The cast sat around one night and that idea came up and I said, 'This is it. Perfect. That's how we do it.'"

As for the upcoming Hunger Games films, reports now confirm that Hoffman completed work on Part 1 and had just seven days left of shooting on Part 2.

His absence will not require any recasting, just a rewrite of one scene. And so Mockingjay Part 2 becomes the final film in Hoffman's remarkable career.

"Words cannot convey the devastating loss we are all feeling right now. Philip was a wonderful person and an exceptional talent, and our hearts are breaking," reads a statement released by The Hunger Games author Suzanne Collins, the films' director Francis Lawrence, producers Nina Jacobson and Jon Kilik and star Jennifer Lawrence.

Honouring Hoffman

Broadway theatres in New York City will dim their marquee lights Wednesday night in memory of Philip Seymour Hoffman, the movie and theatre star who earned three Tony Award nominations. The Broadway League said Monday the lights will be dimmed for one minute starting at 7:45 p.m. Eastern time. Hoffman made his Broadway debut in Sam Shepard's True West with John C. Reilly in 2000 and followed it up three years later with Eugene O'Neill's Long Day's Journey Into Night with Brian Dennehy and Vanessa Redgrave. In 2012, he played a powerful Willy Loman in Death of a Salesman by Arthur Miller under the direction of Mike Nichols. Each time he earned a Tony nod. He also was a longtime supporter of the off-Broadway Labyrinth Theatre Company, where he served as co-artistic director.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

John Mayer

Recovering tweetaholic Mayer has fallen off the webbed wagon

Look out, Twitter. John Mayer is back on the scene. After making a big deal of quitting the social media forum back in 2010, Mayer logged back on over the weekend with a cheerful, "I'm back. What'd I miss?" His return might have something to do with the fact that his girlfriend, Katy Perry, is the most popular person on Twitter. Or maybe he's gotten over his Twitter-induced writer's block. In 2011, Mayer explained why he had to quit Twitter: "I realized about a year ago that I couldn't have a complete thought anymore, and I was a tweetaholic," he said. "I had four million Twitter followers, and I was always writing on it. And I stopped using Twitter as an outlet and I started using Twitter as the instrument to riff on, and it started to make my mind smaller and smaller and smaller. And I couldn't write a song."

Top Chef Canada adds dash of Dean and teaspoon of Tori to its panel

Tori Spelling and Dean McDermott ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Reality TV duo Tori Spelling and Dean McDermott will guest judge on the next season of Top Chef Canada.

Food Network Canada says Toronto Raptors forward Amir Johnson and star chefs Chuck Hughes, Lynn Crawford and Susur Lee are among the other guest judges for the season.

Seven men and seven women will compete on the new season, which premieres March 10 (at 9 p.m. ET/10 p.m. PT).

Food Network says it's the "most extreme season" of the series, in which chefs from across the country battle for the title and prizes, including $100,000.

Actress Lisa Ray returns to host and critique dishes alongside head judge Mark McEwan and restaurateur Shereen Arazm.

Last month, McDermott's publicist confirmed that the Toronto-born actor and Chopped Canada host had entered rehab for "some health and personal issues."

McDermott and Spelling married in 2006 and have four children.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Romance in full Bloom for Orlando?

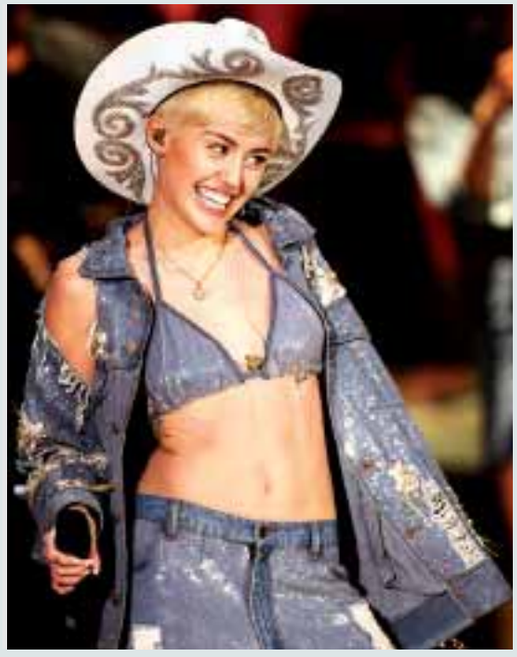
Orlando Bloom

While Orlando Bloom has been enjoying possibly the most amicable divorce in Hollywood history with his split from Miranda Kerr, he also appears to finally be entertaining new prospects again. Bloom was spotted recently at L.A. bar the Roger Room with French actress Nora Arnezeder, and though he was on his best behaviour sources could tell something was up, according to People magazine. "Orlando was there just with a girl and not in a group," a source says. "He knew that there were paparazzi outside so he was being very careful about his behaviour with her." The pair later shared a ride home on his motorcycle.

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word



Think Miley's act is offensive? She doesn't give a Cyrus

MELINDA TAUB
Metro World News

Miley Cyrus could either be the next Madonna or the next Howard Hughes. The next Michael Jackson or the next, well, Michael Jackson. In other words, she could be an enduring superstar or completely flame out, and a new profile by Ronan Farrow (who knows a few things about growing up in a celebrity bubble) in W makes both possibilities seem equally likely.

Among the details we learn about Miley: She apparently hates to leave her house, doesn't listen to people unless they're talking about music, and relates strongly to Blanche Dubois, the mentally frail heroine of A Streetcar Named Desire.

Some of the things Miley doesn't like to listen to are the accusations that her act, which frequently involves spanking and groping women of colour and little people, is offensive. "I don't give a s—," she says. "I'm not Disney, where they have, like, an Asian girl, a black girl, and a white girl, to be politically correct, and, like, everyone has bright-coloured T-shirts. You know, it's like, I'm not making any kind of statement. Anyone that hates on you is always below you, because they're just jealous of what you have."

Probably it's not a great idea to respond to accusations of racism with, "You're below me." That could be misconstrued. Or correctly construed.

Miley's own cast, though, also spoke out in her defense.

"I say, 'Bah, humbug' to that," African American backup dancer Amazon Ashley says to critics. "Miley treats me with the utmost respect. Twerking is my act. It's what I enjoy; it's who I am."

Little person Brittney Guzman agrees. "When she grabs my boobs, we're just having fun," she says. "It's not degrading."

"We're just having fun" has never sounded so creepy.

Don't let your 2014 resolutions fizzle out

One month in.
Whether it's working out or breaking a habit, there are ways to get back on track

MELISSA DUNNE
life@metronews.ca

You are likely to slip but dust yourself off and try again. ISTOCK

Mark Twain saw the glass as half empty in terms of New Year's resolutions. In January 1863, he wrote "Now is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual."

It turns out the great American writer wasn't far off the mark. Research by John Norcross, a professor of psychology at the University of Scranton, found 29 per cent of resolvers had already failed 14 days in and by February that number jumps to 36 per cent.

Mere hours into Jan. 1, I was guzzling Diet Coke straight from a bottle left over from a holiday party, though giving up the stuff was my resolution.

Like many Canadians, my desire to stick to my New Year's resolution quickly fizzled.

The first mistake I made in January was failing to modify my environment, says Norcross. Having soda in the house was akin to walking outside in six-inch heels after a polar vortex and expecting not to slip.

On Jan. 2, I should have poured the pop down the drain, not down my throat. But my will to try went flat and I was back to drinking about two litres of caramel-coloured, aspartame-spiked, carbonated syrup per day.

This was another classic resolver mistake.

"A little slip is not a total fall," said Norcross, a man who has literally written the book on making changes stick.

You will slip. The trick is to dust yourself off and try again, not lie on the ground surrounded by empty pop bottles. Norcross points out a study that showed 71 per cent of eventually successful resolvers said their first slip actually strengthened their resolve.

On Jan. 9, I resolved to white-knuckle my bête-noire anew, determined not to turn red from the embarrassment of failing this time.

So far, I have crushed my habit like those thin aluminum cans that used to fill my recycling bin. While Norcross' research shows by Canada Day 56 per cent of resolvers have given up, that means 44 per cent are still bubbling with optimism.

Twain be damned, in 2014 I'm going to see my glass as half full of soda ... water, thank you very much.

Get back on track

Have you already given up on your resolution for 2014? Get back on track with some tips from John Norcross, the author of Changeology.

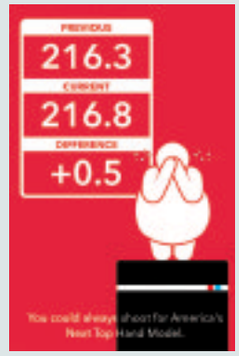
- **Haters to the left.** Surround yourself with family and friends who support you and your goal.
- **Learn from the past.** Understand why you slipped and recommit.
- **Bribe yourself.** If at the end of every week you have stayed the course, reward yourself with anything from a pedicure to concert tickets.
- **Keep track.** Seeing your progress in black and white will keep you motivated.

For your phone

Carrot Fit (iPad, $1.99)

MIND THE APP
Kris Abel
@RealKrisAbel
life@metronews.ca

A vengeful, talking computer monitors your weight loss in this darkly comedic fitness parody. Each day you type in your weight, Carrot reacts with outlandish insults and playful effects. Hilarious.



Half-Off

Elisha is now four weeks into her plan to lose 10 pounds in six weeks. But she's at an all-inclusive resort in Mexico on an emergency winter vacation. Will the all-day buffet and open bar do her in? Visit metronews.ca/voices/half-off to find out.

Is your breakfast making you fat?

A salad for breakfast? Don't rule it out. ISTOCK

LINDA CLARKE
Metro World News in New York City

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, so you better do it right.

According Dr. Rob Kominiarek in Ohio, if you don't choose wisely, you could be packing on the pounds before noon rolls around.

"The healthy breakfast is made of foods that don't raise your blood sugar," says Kominiarek.

"Foods that raise blood sugar then raise insulin, and insulin is the fat-storage hormone.

"It tells the body to store fat.

"Foods that keep blood sugar stable are foods that enable us to use the available blood sugars and even stored fat."

To maintain stable blood sugars, choose low-glycemic promoting foods, like fresh vegetables (yes, even for breakfast) and fruits.

And opt for whole grains, as unprocessed as possible.

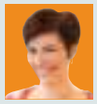
Processed food is more easily broken down in the body, releasing sugars more quickly into the blood stream.

Rolled oats, for instance, are more quickly digested into sugars than steel cut oats, or whole oat groats (grain).

Kominiarek says it doesn't matter what time you eat breakfast, as long as you "feel good throughout the day" and "follow up with healthy meals through the day."

Health Solutions

Brain food and then some



NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

You've seen the chain email that shows walnuts were created in the shape of your brain because they are brain food. And that carrots when cut into rounds look like eyes and are coincidentally good for eyes.

Google it! Kind of cool little quirky facts to kick around.

But the truth is, walnuts are good for lots more than just brains. They are also good for making ho-hum sandwiches, omelets, pastas and salads turn into amazing meals!

• Walnuts have been shown to reduce inflammation overall due to their good fat content.
• They contain high amounts of Omega 3, which has been shown to reduce the incidence of Alzheimer's, depression and ADHD, among other things.
• Walnuts are one of the highest anti-oxidant nuts.
• Consumption of them has been linked to reduced risk of diabetes.
• One study says that they can reduce the stress related to high blood pressure.

Creative ways to use walnuts

• Toss whole and raw into salads.
• Toast and use in place of croutons in soup.
• Grind and add to pastry dough or shortbread.
• Puree into hummus.
• Use as a base for blue cheese appetizers.
• Make a gremolata and use everywhere.

Walnuts pair well in both sweet and savoury applications, plus their crunch and nutrients are good for your brain ('cause that's the way they are shaped — ha!).

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

What's crunchy, healthy and goes on pizza, pasta and more?

THERESA ALBERT
myfriendinfood.com

Gremolata is just one of the creative ways in which you can use walnuts. COURTESY THERESA ALBERT

If you go too far and end up pureeing the nuts in the blender, add some Parmesan cheese and call it a pesto.

A quick pulse is really all you need to chop the nuts and keep them whole to make this topping known as Gremolata.

Traditionally, lemon zest is the key ingredient and the others, as well as their proportions, are as flexible as your imagination.

Once made, this keeps in the fridge for a couple of weeks and jazzes up every salad, sandwich, pasta, dip, flatbread, pizza... You get the idea.

Ingredients

• 1/2 cup flat leaf parsley (ensure that it is rinsed and dried very well)
• 1/2 cup walnuts (toasted lightly in a dry pan)
• 1 clove garlic (minced)
• 1 tsp lemon zest
• Pinch of coarse salt
• 2-3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

1. Add all ingredients to a blender or mini-chopper and pulse until coarsely chopped. Store in fridge in a covered jar for up to 2 weeks. **THERESA ALBERT OF MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM**

FLASH FOOD

From your fridge to your table in 30 minutes or less

PROGRAM PROVIDES EXPERIENCE

CHANCE TO PRACTISE WHAT YOU'RE TAUGHT

KONSTANTIN CHAGIN/SHUTTERSTOCK

Students in the University of Regina's co-operative education (co-op) program earned $9.7 million in wages in 2013. But it's not just the promise of a paycheque that draws students to the program.

"Being able to practise and experience what you're taught in class and getting paid is the perfect balance," says Esther Edoho, a University of Regina student in the faculty of business administration. "Another perk is that you get to work with professionals in your field of study — they have offered me advice on how to progress with my future career and what I will need to know to stand out when it comes time for interviews," she adds.

Sydney Gossard is in her final year of studies with the faculty of arts (English) and Centre for Continuing Education (public relations certificate) at the University of Regina. She agrees that the co-op program provides relevant experience.

"My academic experience hasn't been trumped by my co-op experience, but rather enhanced the skills and values I could have only gained from the classroom are put to use in my work placements, and then further adapted into specific tasks and projects," says Gossard.

Since its inception in 1969, the university's co-op program has had a record of 835 career-related placements in 2013 — a 45 per cent growth in the last seven years. With more than 50 programs to choose from, students from the faculties of arts, business administration, engineering and applied science and science are benefitting from an average of 12-16 months of supervised work experience by the time of graduation.

"I have been able to use skills specifically related to my degree — my writing skills, my communication skills, my creativity," says Gossard, who is certain this experience will aid her in the future.

In addition to the co-op program both students have taken advantage of the other services offered at the University of Regina's Career Centre, which offers workshops on resume writing and interviewing, long-term career goal setting, and career and volunteer fairs.

For both students, the university's career centre has bridged the gap from classroom to career.

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University of Regina

Penguins goalie Marc-Andre Fleury makes a save against the Senators' Mika Zibanejad in Pittsburgh on Monday night. GENE J. PUSKAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pens' James Neal gives Sens raw deal

NHL. Pittsburgh forward scores 18th goal of season in OT

James Neal scored at 3:05 of overtime, helping the Pittsburgh Penguins beat the Ottawa Senators 2-1 on Monday night.

Neal netted his 18th of the season and scored his first goal in nine games for the Penguins, who won for the 16th time in 17 home games and are now 23-4 at Consol Energy Center. Pittsburgh also avoided back-to-back regulation losses for the first time since dropping three straight in early November.

On Monday

Penguins	Senators
2	1

Ottawa goaltender Craig Anderson stopped Robert Bortuzzo from the slot in overtime, but the rebound popped out to Neal, who dragged the puck around a Senators defender before dumping a shot past an out-of-position Anderson and into an empty net.

Ottawa's Stephane Da Costa and Pittsburgh's Brian Gibbons scored in the first period.

Ottawa's best chance to take the lead in regulation came midway through the third period, but Penguins goalie Marc-Andre Fleury robbed former Norris Trophy winner Erik Karlsson with a sparkling glove save. Fleury, while pushing from post to post, reached high above the crossbar, snagging the fluttering wrist shot from Karlsson, who had a partially wide open net to shoot at.

Fleury stopped 24 shots for his league-leading 30th win of the season, while Anderson turned aside 46 shots for the hard-luck loss.

Penguins captain Sidney Crosby, who leads the NHL with 75 points, was held without a point and hasn't scored a goal in five games, his longest drought since a seven-game slump earlier this season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Super Bowl bets

Bookies boast record profits

Gamblers wagered a record $119.4 million at Nevada casinos on the Super Bowl, allowing sportsbooks to reap an unprecedented profit as the betting public lost out in Seattle's rout of the Peyton Manning-led Denver Broncos.

Unaudited tallies showed sportsbooks made $19.7 million on the action, the Gaming Control Board announced Monday. That's millions more than the past three Super Bowl wins combined.

The Denver Broncos were a 2.5-point favourite, but the Seattle Seahawks took the championship 43-8. Oddsmakers said Peyton Manning fans drove the unprecedented handle.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Super Bowl bust

Business owner out $7 million

Seattle's victory in the Super Bowl has cost Houston furniture store mogul Jim McIngvale some $7 million.

McIngvale is the owner of one of the nation's largest independent furniture stores, Gallery Furniture. He promised customers who spent at least $6,000 in the past two weeks and took delivery before Sunday's game that he'd refund their purchase cost if Seattle won.

McIngvale said Monday his accountant is "pulling his hair out." He says he didn't do well financially, but did build his brand. He says the promotion was not covered by insurance.

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‘The pressure’s clearly on them’

Hockey. Great things expected from Ovechkin and Malkin’s Russians as they enter Sochi as ‘centrepiece’ of Games

Friends and family have been calling Alex Ovechkin and Evgeni Malkin for months, asking about Olympic tickets and wanting to know who was going to be on the Russian team.

“I field questions about Sochi always,” Malkin said. “I feel right now it’s pressure for the team, for me. It’s everyone.”

The Sochi Olympics are a showcase of a generation for Russia and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, and with that comes the pressure of a lifetime for those taking part in the event the country believes it must win.

“I don’t think about it because I don’t want to take pressure right now on me,” Ovechkin said last month. “But it’s kind of hard to do. Every time when I go to the news and on the Internet, I just see about the Olympic Games.”

From a hockey standpoint, that means attention on Ovechkin, Malkin, captain Pavel Datyuk and NHL-star-turned-KHL-hero Ilya Kovalchuk, and the expectation of gold on Feb. 23 at Bolshoy Ice Dome. Anything less isn’t an option the Russians want to consider.

It’s similar to what Canada went through in Vancouver in 2010 with a need to show dominance in a national sport. Given that Russia hasn’t won gold since 1992, when it played as the Unified Team, there’s even more anxiety.

“I think that always goes with the territory,” U.S. general manager David Poile said. “It’s probably even more so because starting from the top with Putin, he’s wanted these Olympics; the centrepiece is the hockey. The whole Sochi is sort of a man-made area, if you will, just for the Olympics.

“They’re putting literally billions of dollars into this, and there’s no question that the hockey is the centrepiece of the Olympics. The pressure’s clearly on them. We’re going to see the best of the Russians, that’s for sure.”

Canada proved four years ago that pressure isn’t prohibitive to winning; that being at home can be an incentive.

With the whole world watching them in their country, the Russians hope they, too, can capitalize on the home-ice advantage. And Ovechkin believes that mentality is his team’s biggest strength.

“(The) most important thing is (it’s) us against the whole world,” said Ovechkin, who dreamed as a child of representing Russia in a home Olympics. “I don’t think somebody is going to be there ... to be just in the Olympic Games. Our mission is try to win the gold medal and play our best hockey.”

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Spotlight similarities

“We can relate, for sure. It wasn’t that long ago, and we all know how proud of a hockey nation Russia is, too.”

Sidney Crosby acknowledges the parallels between his gold-medal-winning Canadian team from four years ago and the 2014 Russians.

Russians Sergei Gonchar, left, Alex Ovechkin and Ilya Kovalchuk were skated out of the rink 7-3 by Team Canada at the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver. The home team should have ample inspiration to get revenge as their quest for gold gets underway on Feb. 13 against Slovakia. BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

Thomsen at his best when he’s tuned out

Invermere, B.C.’s Ben Thomsen is confident heading into the Olympics after a second-place finish in Sochi during the 2012 season. JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The biggest moment of Ben Thomsen’s racing career came two years ago in Sochi.

After a tough start to this season, the Canadian alpine skier is hoping to find some of that magic on the same Russian mountain at the Olympics.

Thomsen finished a surprising second at a World Cup downhill event back in February 2012, a result the 22-year-old believes will give him an edge at the Games.

“I’m definitely confident going back there. It was a huge part of my life and changed my life drastically,” Thomsen said. “It will be interesting to see what kind of feelings and emotions come up when I get there.”

The Invermere, B.C., native has had a mixed bag of results during his career, threatening the podium at some events while struggling badly at others. Thomsen’s recipe for success seems to be simple — don’t over think it.

“As I look back on my career, the times that I’ve done really well is when I don’t really know what I’m about to face and I’m just going into it full bore,” he said. “If I know a situation might be a little tricky I might kind of back off the throttle a little bit.”

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ski patrollers packing heat

“Georgia is on the back side of the ski hill and getting off gondola stations, you’ve got five armed guards ... it’s a bit nerve-racking and unwelcoming when you’re from a place like Canada.”

Ben Thomsen, on security during his 2012 World Cup second-place finish in Sochi.

Austrian pastime

After missing the first three Winter Games, Alpine skiing joined the program in 1936. Ten gold medals will be awarded in Sochi in men’s and women’s downhill, slalom, giant slalom, super-G and super combined.

Did you know?

105

Austria has won a record 105 Alpine skiing medals at the Olympics, nearly twice as many as any other country. Switzerland ranks second with 56.

Who’ll lead Austrians?

Raich won’t be on hand for opening

Austria is in need of a new flag-bearer for Friday’s opening ceremony at the Winter Olympics as Alpine skier Benjamin Raich has delayed his trip to Sochi.

Raich will skip the Feb. 14 super-combine due to back problems.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hockey

Swedes select Nyquist to replace Franzen

Sweden’s Olympic hockey team has replaced an injured Detroit Red Wings forward with a healthy one. Gustav Nyquist was given a spot on the roster on Monday to replace Johan Franzen. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cross-country skiing

Tough decisions ahead in Norway

Norway’s unrivaled depth in cross-country skiing is causing the team some problems ahead of the Sochi Olympics.

With a handful of medal contenders in nearly every event, the Norwegians face the prospect of having to drop either a double Olympic champion or a former world champion from the men’s individual sprint race.

Each team can enter four skiers, and Norway’s coaches have already promised spots to three athletes. The fourth was set to go to Petter Northug, the team’s big star who has struggled with illness this season.

But that would mean leaving out former sprint world champion Ola Vigen Hattestad in the fourth spot.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Two-time Olympic gold medallist Petter Northug. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Silver's inheritance

NBA rounding into form by getting top heavy

Adam Silver is taking over the NBA at a good time.

In fact, for five teams, it's a really good time.

Indiana, Miami, Oklahoma City, San Antonio and Portland all enter the week with winning percentages of .700 or better, and that's significant.

Only one other time in league history — 1997-98 — have as many as five teams won at such a rate, that coming in a season when Chicago, Indiana, Utah, Seattle and the Los Angeles Lakers did the honours. It's conceivable that more than five finish with that good a record, with the Los Angeles Clippers and Houston still having realistic shots, too.

So in a season where so much of the narrative has been about how bad many NBA teams are, and with good reason, there's another end of the spectrum to consider as well.

At their current rates, Indiana and Oklahoma City are on pace to finish with two of the top 25 records in NBA history.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

No improvisation necessary

Jazz centre Enes Kanter battles with the Toronto Raptors' Jonas Valanciunas on Monday night in Salt Lake City, Utah. DeMar DeRozan scored 23 points and Valanciunas added 18 to help the Raptors turn back the Jazz 94-79 for their fourth win in five games. RICK BOWMER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Team Canada lead Lisa Weagle, left, and third Emma Miskew sweep as skip Rachel Homan calls the shot against Yukon/Northwest Territories at the Scotties Tournament of Hearts on Monday in Montreal. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Homan making fans out of her opponents

Scotties. Yukon's Koltun looks to emulate Ottawa skip's success, even after losing to her

Yukon's Sarah Koltun can't help but look up to Canada's Rachel Homan at the Scotties Tournament of Hearts.

Koltun's team first noticed Homan in 2007 at the Canada Winter Games in Whitehorse and have been fans ever since.

The 20-year-old Koltun played Homan twice at the Canadian Juniors — both losses — coming into Monday.

Their first match at the Scotties was more of the same.

"We try to play and train similarly — putting in the effort, the time, that's necessary to be successful," Koltun said after dropping a 9-3 decision to Homan (4-0) after eight ends. "That hard work will eventually pay off."

Yukon (1-4) is by far the youngest at this year's Scotties. Koltun, lead Andrea Sinclair and second Patty Willingham are all 20 years old, while third Chelsea Duncan is 21.

"We definitely look up to them because they've been so successful at a young age," said Willingham of Homan's Canadian rink.

In other afternoon matches Monday, P.E.I.'s Kim Dolan (2-2) edged Ontario's Allison Flaxey (1-3) 7-5. Flaxey scored one in the seventh end, and another in the eighth, but couldn't complete the comeback.

Manitoba's Chelsea Carey (3-1) scored four in the ninth against Nova Scotia's Heather Smith (1-3), who conceded right after.

The afternoon draw also saw a Saskatchewan team that could do no wrong, beating New Brunswick's Andrea Crawford (2-2) 9-3 after eight ends. Saskatchewan skip Stefanie Lawton (3-1) stole four in the third and another three in the fifth to seal the victory.

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Next on the schedule

Rachel Homan had Monday night off to prepare for Tuesday's matches.

- Homan will take on Alberta's Val Sweeting at 9 a.m., and Nova Scotia's Heather Smith at 7:30 p.m.

Old man Derek not ready to quit

New York Yankees shortstop Derek Jeter has taken on-field batting practice for the first time since his 2013 season was cut short by injuries.

Jeter hit with authority to all fields during a five-round, 39-swing session Monday at the Yankees' minor-league complex in Florida. Jeter also took grounders at shortstop for the first time this year, fielding 34 balls at his usual position.

"Everything is good so far, knock on wood," Jeter said.

Jeter, who turns 40 in June, had hit in an indoor batting cage and fielded grounders on infield grass the previous two weeks. He was limited to 17 games last year after breaking an ankle during the 2012 playoffs.

The Yankees captain is not worrying about those who doubt his ability to return from the severe injury.

"My job is to be ready to play," Jeter said. "I remember when I was 35, everyone said that was it. He can't play anymore. End of my career. So, it's really nothing different."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Derek Jeter played in just 17 games with the Yankees in 2013 due to injuries. PATRICK SMITH/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You are in a domineering mood at the moment and won't hesitate to tell others how to do things. But anyone who tries to tell you will most likely wish they had kept quiet.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You may find it hard to believe what you hear today but don't reject it out of hand because it may be true. Reserve judgment until later in the week when there are more facts available.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Information will come your way today that enables you to put one over on a rival. All is fair in love and war so don't hesitate to use what you learn for your own benefit.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
It is important over the next 24 hours that you know when to speak up and when to stay silent. Important people will be either impressed or annoyed by what you have to say, so make sure you say the right thing.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
It might be tempting to work even harder and faster but you will accomplish more in the long-term if you start slowly and think about what you are doing.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You may want to push ahead with a project that is close to your heart but according to the planets a colleague is having doubts and you must deal with those doubts first if you want to make progress.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Anyone who thinks you are not ambitious will get a shock today as you push yourself harder than ever. But while it is okay to be hard on yourself it is not okay to be hard on friends and loved ones.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You need to ask the right questions today and to do so you need to see your life for what it is, not what you wish it might be. Be completely honest with yourself.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
According to the planets someone you work with is not being entirely straight with you. Before you go any further together in what you are working on demand to know where they are coming from.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Someone whose point of view is very different to your own will say something that you cannot let pass and most likely you will end up having a major argument. But that's OK. It's wrong to remain silent.

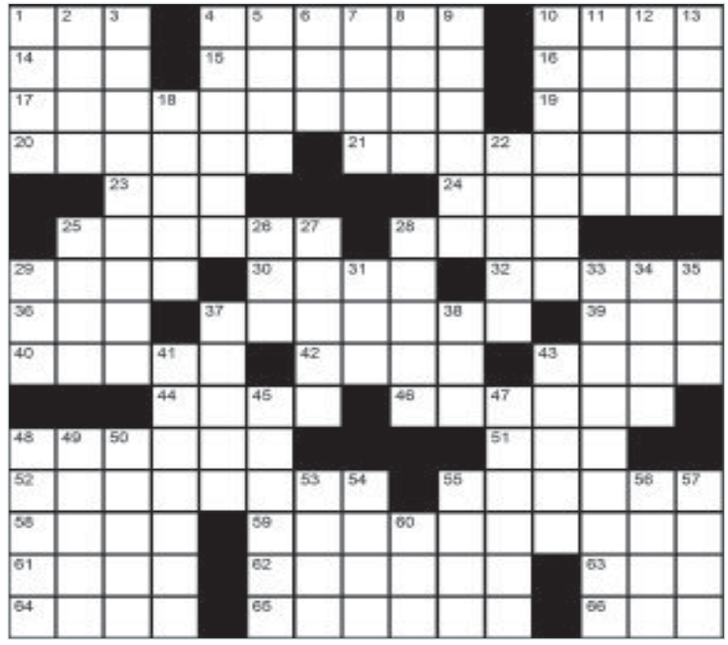
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
If you put your mind to it today you can change something about yourself that you have disliked for a very long time. How will you do that? By replacing a bad habit with a good habit.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You are so self-confident at the moment that you can't see the obstacle that is ahead of you. You will see it soon, in the meantime, ignorance is bliss!. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

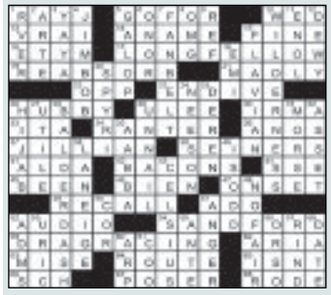
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Troublesome-ly tote
4. Biggest thing since the Cronut
10. Shania Twain trophy, e.g.
14. Montevideo is its cap.
15. Sarajevo's locale
16. Bitterly bellyache
17. Science Centre in Calgary: 2 wds.
19. Comic strip, __ and Janis
20. Ms. Berry's
21. 1985 Michael J. Fox movie: 2 wds.
23. Frigid
24. Way to move a wheel: 2 wds.
25. Skincare brand
28. Vacationing spot
29. Computer company
30. Cart-pullers
32. Welsh poet Mr. Thomas
36. Clash
37. Secret
39. Wonderment
40. Certain carpeting
42. __ counter
43. Determine
44. Wedding gown trim
46. Studies
48. Dormant volcano in northwestern BC, Mount __
51. Peace sign's spelled-out shape
52. Guy friendship, often on reality TV
55. Mr. Whibley, Sum 41 frontman
58. South Dakota dam
59. Carly Rae Jepsen's new title role on Broadway
61. Sultanate of __
62. Haunted house hangouts
63. Turnaround, slangily
64. German philosopher, Immanuel __ (b.1724 - d.1804)
65. Scotland's Loch creature, affectionately
66. Bruce Cockburn's "__ _ Tree Falls"

Down
1. Particular Protestant, puny-ly
2. Fertilizer ingredient
3. Jonathan Swift classic, __ Travels
4. Particular TV network symbol: 2 wds.
5. Antarctica: __ Ice Shelf
6. Slitherer
7. It's a bug
8. Limerick's land
9. California competition for the Raptors
10. The __ Family on PBS' "Downton Abbey"
11. "The Brady Bunch" mom
12. "Girl You Know It's True" duo half
13. High up
18. Stress side effect, some say
22. Expressionist painter, Emil __ (b.1867 - d.1956)
25. Health food berry
26. __'easter
27. Rusty stuff, Iron __
28. Collectively: 2 wds.
29. Canadian actress Ms. Cook, et al.
31. Twilight
33. CTV's "The Social" co-host: 2 wds.
34. Grass appendages
35. '90s sitcom, "__ and Stacey"
37. Shopping spot
38. 5-5, in sports
41. Nourishment
43. Soeur's sibling
45. High-kicking performance
47. Very much opposed to
48. Novel with no paper pages
49. Television genre
50. Title comedy role for Adam Sandler
53. Quote
54. Tree-like Tolkien creatures
55. Metric system prefix meaning 'one-tenth'
56. Treble __
57. Bob Marley & The Wailers album
60. Insult, in slang

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

	1		2		9	5	4	
					6			2
5						3		9
	7		9			4	8	
				4				
	6	8			3		1	
2		7						1
8			5					
	4	5	8		1		2	

Yesterday's Sudoku

5	4	8	6	9	7	3	1	2
9	7	2	1	3	8	4	5	6
6	3	1	5	4	2	9	8	7
4	2	3	9	8	1	6	7	5
7	9	5	2	6	3	1	4	8
1	8	6	7	5	4	2	3	9
2	1	9	4	7	5	8	6	3
8	6	7	3	1	9	5	2	4
3	5	4	8	2	6	7	9	1

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